Amendments to the Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) In a transaction involving a disclosure of confidential information by first parties to second parties, requiring the second parties to adopt security measures with respect to the handling of the information and periodically respond to requests of the first parties for assurances of the implementation and observance of the security measures, a method for providing the assurances to the first parties, comprising:

arranging with a selected number of the second parties to acquire, compile and store in a database, information regarding the adoption, implementation and observation of security measures for each of the selected number of second parties;

arranging with a selected number of the first parties subscription services providing the selected number of first parties with assurances of the security measures of the selected number of second parties upon request; and

providing the assurances of the security measures of the selected number of second parties to the selected number of first parties upon request.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 further including updating the security measures information stored in the database for each ~~vendor~~ second party periodically.

3.   (Original) The method according to claim 1 further including updating the security measures information stored in the database upon a notification by a respective second party and verification by a third party.

4.   (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein the acquisition, compilation and storage of the security measures information of the selected number of second parties is performed at no cost to the selected number of second parties.

5.   (Original) The method according to claim 1 including rendering the subscription services for a fee.

6.   (Original) The method according to claim 1 further including providing a rating for each second party based upon a type of the confidential information and the security measures of the vendor.

7.   (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 further including providing a rating for each second party based upon the security measures of the ~~vendor~~ second party.

8.   (Currently Amended) A method for providing security information on a plurality of vendors to a plurality of clients, comprising:

providing an assessment of security procedures <u>adopted, implemented and observed</u> for each of the plurality of vendors;

storing each assessment in a vendor security database;

providing access to the vendor security database to each client to allow each client to review the plurality of assessments.

9.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 wherein the assessment is provided at cost to the vendor.

10.   (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the assessment is provided [[at]] for a fee to the vendor.

11.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 wherein the assessment is provided at no cost to the vendor.

12.   (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the access provided to each client is <u>pursuant to the rendering of</u> subscription services for a fee.

13.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 wherein the assessment is updated periodically.

14.   (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the assessment is updated whenever the vendor updates its security procedures, the updates are verified and provided to the <u>database</u> [[VMS]].

15.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 wherein each assessment comprises one or more of SAS70 reports, Penetration Reports, Information Security Policies, Computer Incident Response Policies, DR Plans, Business Resumption Plans, Insurance Coverages, 3rd Party Vendor Management Policies & Programs and Annual Financial Reports.

16.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 further including providing a rating for each vendor based upon a type of information to be protected and the security procedures of the vendor.

17.   (Original) The method according to claim 8 further including providing a rating for each vendor based upon the security procedures of the vendor.